



**march of dimes®**  
**nicu family support®**

**Mid-Year Report  
January 2011 -July 2011**

It is with great pleasure that we submit the interim report on the progress of the March of Dimes NICU Family Support® program at Memorial Health University Medical Center in Savannah, Georgia. The program provides education, information and comfort to families during the NICU hospitalization, the transition home and in the event of a newborn death. We are grateful to the Mayer Family Foundation for your financial support which allows these services to be provided.

It has been an impressive six months for the NICU Family Support® and the Memorial Health University Medical Center NICU. The NICU Family Support® program has achieved many successes in support of our families. The following are specific and detailed outcomes used to evaluate the progress of the program:

**A desired Outcome of NICU Family Support Program is to:**

Provide information and comfort to families during the NICU hospitalization of their newborn, during the transition home and in the event of a newborn death.

**Number of Parent Care Kits Distributed to NICU families**

A total of 275 Parent Care kits have been distributed to NICU families. 273 were given to English speaking families and 2 were given to Spanish speaking families.

**Number of beside visits within 72 hours of admission**

104 beside visits were made within 72 hours of admission. (The data collection method was changed this year and has not been accurately capturing this data. Changes will be made for the last months of this year so that a more accurate count will be available.)

**Number of Parent Activity Hours**

77 Parent Hours have been offered so far this year with 497 parents and family members being touched by these activities. There were 7 Parent Hours offered in January, 12 offered in February, 11 offered in March, 10 offered in April, 11 offered in May, 16 offered in June, and 10 offered in July. The average attendance has been 6.45. The Parent Hour topics include: Milk & Cookies (Breastfeeding Support); 10 Important Things You Need to Know... before Taking Your Baby Home / Risk Reduction; Discussion led by graduate NICU parents; Car Seat Safety; Speech & Language Development; Infant Massage; Scrap Booking; Journey Beads (an opportunity for parents to make an add-a-bead necklace with each bead representing an experience in their baby's NICU journey); and Lunch & Learn – infection control at home. The breastfeeding support group and Journey Beads are usually offered weekly. Other Parent Hours meet monthly except for Lunch & Learn which is offered twice a month.

**Parent-to-Parent Volunteers:**

Three graduate parents are trained to provide bedside services to current NICU families. One graduate parent plans to begin training this fall.

**Survey Results:**

Parent satisfaction surveys are provided to families after each Parent Hour and are asked to rank the Parent Hour as excellent, good, fair or poor. During the first six months of this year, 273 of the parents who participated gave a rating of excellent and 72 gave a rating of good. No one who participated gave a rating of fair or poor. Below is a selection of some of the comments received from the surveys:

- Very good to meet other parents. Helped a lot with support.
- I always sincerely enjoy the Parent Hours.
- I loved the support.
- I learned a lot of new things.
- I really like the Parent Hours.

- Good to talk to other mothers.
- It was really good. I learned stuff I didn't know.
- Non-intimidating environment with my baby's doctors.
- Good and very laid back. Made me feel comfortable.
- Fun to hear updates from others going through the same things.
- I am learning more and more each time that I come to a Parent Hour.
- I felt really great because other parents had some of the same questions I did.
- It showed me that the doctors and March of Dimes are concerned.
- I was a bit nervous because I didn't quite know what to expect, but it was informative and the people ensured a comfortable conversational environment.

#### **Staff Development**

This year's staff development involved paying all expenses for Krista McLaurin, NICU nurse, to attend the Graven's Conference in Tampa, Florida from January 25-29. Krista learned a great deal at the conference and has shared with other nurses as well as applied this new information to her work.

With the collaboration of Memorial Health University Medical Center and the generosity of Mayer Family Foundation, NICU Family Support® is able to provide information and comfort to NICU families, regardless of the infant's diagnosis or outcome. While NICU family Support® makes available informative and caring materials to NICU families, its service component is what makes it unique. Under the guidance of the March of Dimes NICU Family Support Specialist, volunteers, staff, and graduate NICU parents, the program is able to give much needed assistance to families experiencing stress of a NICU hospitalization. It is an honor for Memorial Health University Medical Center to partner with The Mayer Family Foundation and the March of Dimes in this innovative program.